

CIRCULAR WALK
39
COLLECTION

Key

Footpath route



Alternative route



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Bisley and Upper Toadsmoor Valley

9 miles (14.4 km)



Bisley and Upper Toadsmoor Valley

Start . . . The Stirrup Cup Inn, Bisley

The George Watkins Walk

This is a varied and fairly strenuous walk, but it can be divided into two sections of four and half miles either side of Bisley. The Toadsmoor Valley section can also be shortened to walks of three and three and a half miles to avoid a potentially muddy area above Toadsmoor Pond.

Facing away from the Inn walk up surfaced lane with 'no through road' sign. After last house carry on in line with field boundaries to the right. Negotiate gate/stile and on to a further gate. Beyond this turn left, walk down sloping field, still with boundary to right, to small stream that can be stepped over (1).

Go through wooden gate, climb steep bank taking a diagonal line to the right across field to another gate. Through this turn left along field boundary. Where this bends left follow grassy track to right until metal gate gives access to surfaced lane. Turn right down lane to Througham Slad and follow track between stone walls and later hedges. The track goes through a gate and bends right.

Follow track through gateway and climb to cattle grid, immediately turn left down wide track. Near bottom cross stile on right by metal gate and walk up field.

Negotiate two gates/stiles, continuing to corner of field to gate (near Ash tree) giving access to track between hedges. Follow this around hillside to where a junction is reached (2) take right hand path and walk uphill between hedges. After 400m gate gives access to field. Continue in line with field boundaries on left and negotiate two gates.

Cross public road, go through small gate to walk in same line with field boundary on left.

Transfer to other side of fence by way of gate about halfway. After reaching gate at junction to Bisley/Eastcombe road with branch to Oakridge, cross and take wide track descending between trees. About 100m track bends right (3) but keep in line through metal gate. (*Here you can return to Bisley by continuing down track and rejoining the walk at [9]*).

After negotiating another gate a further gate gives access to metal lane. Follow lane for about 300m and after the cottages where lane begins to bend left, go right through a gate. Walk between fences and after a further gate, cross field to stile with stone slab behind it. Cross another field to gateway left of ruined buildings. Proceed in line with field boundary to right. About 100m (4) turn right through gate, walk diagonally left across field, aim to right of cottage to reach stile giving access to lane (5). (*Here the walk can be shortened by turning right along lane. The walk will continue at [8]*).

Turn left up lane for 100m then right down track between trees. Fork right, where steps are encountered veer left, veering through wood to junction with well defined path. Go left and pass house 'Honey Hill', bear right down surfaced lane. At next junction keep right, walk down hill for a few yards (6). (*Here the walk can be shortened by continuing along road to pick up route at [7]*).

Take track to left that contours hillside. Negotiate stile by house, continue along wide track beyond. After 800m public road is reached, turn right down footpath before side of house and right/right again down lane. Cross bridge then follow track along left hand side of lake passing 'Keepers Cottage' on left. after short steep climb, reach junction (7). Keep straight on, pass house on right, ignore path to left, continue up valley through wood. When metal lane is reached (8) go up left for a few yards. Opposite cottage go right on woodland path which eventually emerges into meadow land. Go over stile by cottage and on to a gate/stile. Bear left at a further gate, walk up between fences to surfaced lane (9), go slightly left up this lane for the return to Bisley.

- There is no off street parking in the village although parking may be possible at either The Bear Inn, George Street or The Stirrup Cup, Cheltenham Road, if permission is first obtained from the Landlord.

• Points of interest -

Village of Bisley

• Places to eat -

The Bear Inn

The Stirrup Cup

Follow arrows with yellow dot. Sometimes plastic arrows with black centre dot may be used.

This walk was created by members of the Stroud Rambling Club as a tribute to George Watkins, the Chairman for 27 years, until his untimely death in 1991.

Under his charismatic leadership and with his breadth of vision the Club developed from a small rambling club into a unique outdoor pursuits organisation promoting walking, climbing, canoeing, cycling and pony trekking.

George was a natural organiser with an infectious enthusiasm and was at his happiest when leading a group in their chosen pursuit whether in a wet cave system under South Wales, a tramp over Dartmoor or on top of the mountains of the world.

Part of his philosophy of life was the promotion of good fellowship through the 'great outdoors'. He firmly believed that the countryside should be accessible to all; an objective he worked diligently to achieve.

It is hoped that this walk in one of George's favourite parts of Gloucestershire will inspire others to follow in his footsteps.

We advise that the relevant OS Pathfinder Map be used in conjunction with this leaflet

Although every attempt has been made to ensure that the information contained within this leaflet is correct at the time of printing, the District Council cannot be held responsible for any discrepancies.